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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 002269

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SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY CAMPBELL'S MEETING WITH DPJ  
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NAOTO KAN

TOKYO 00002269 001.2 OF 003

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission James P. Zumwalt, Reasons 1.4 (b)  
) and (d)

11. (S) SUMMARY: Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell met with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for National Strategy Bureau, Economic and Science and Technology Policy Naoto Kan in Tokyo on September 18. The officials spoke about the historic nature of the DPJ's recent victory and ascension to power, the definition of an "equal relationship" between the U.S. and Japan, security issues related to Okinawa, and upcoming high-level USG visits to Japan. END SUMMARY.

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Historic Changes, Convincing the Public  
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12. (C) Assistant Secretary of State (A/S) for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell met with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for National Strategy Bureau, Economic and Science and Technology Policy Naoto Kan over breakfast at a Tokyo hotel on September 18. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (PDAS) Derek Mitchell also participated in the hour-long meeting. Minister Kan started by pointing out that there were two historic changes taking place now in Japanese politics. The first being the change of ruling party from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and the second being the change from bureaucrat-led governance to that by politicians.

Kan said that one big challenge for politicians now was explaining to the Japanese people why they were taking certain actions and creating certain policies. Especially challenging would be actions and policies related to national security, in which the public traditionally has little interest. In particular, because Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama already spoke publicly about relocating Futenma outside of Okinawa, this was something that would pose a challenge for DPJ politicians who needed to build popular support.

13. (C) Kan said that a challenge for his National Strategy

Bureau (NSB) would be to explain not only its policies, but also Japan's national security strategies in the global context, to the Japanese people. The Minister continued that this would be a real challenge because the Japanese public was fundamentally uninterested in developments overseas.

NOTE: Kan mentioned that his college professor of international relations, Yosuke Nagai, in a book called "the Price of Peace," wrote about President John F. Kennedy's ability to skillfully explain to the American people why missiles in Cuba were a threat to Americans. Because of this, Kan said, Kennedy was able to mobilize public support for his response to the Cuban missile crisis. Kan said that Professor Nagai taught him that there is always a price for peace and security. END NOTE.

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An Equal Relationship, Okinawa  
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14. (S) A/S Campbell advised that while the DPJ worked to bring about such historic changes, it keep in mind some lessons from the recent past. One such lesson was to not only take bold actions, but also take responsibility for those actions. Trying to justify unpopular actions by blaming foreign pressure was not helpful in building a strong and equal relationship between the U.S. and Japan, Campbell said. Such a tactic may be politically expedient, but ultimately leaves a bad impression with the Japanese public, the A/S continued. Another lesson the DPJ could learn from the recent history of bilateral relations was that Japan's tendency to let the U.S. take the initiative on security matters then simply responding was not indicative of an equal relationship. Campbell stated that the U.S. also desires an equal relationship, but that a change in Japanese behavior was necessary. He said the DPJ victory represented a historic opportunity to bring about change in the relationship, and called on the two governments to work together to strengthen the alliance.

15. (C) Campbell said that the Futenma issue was extremely important, and pointed out that the maintenance of a strong U.S. military presence in Asia during these difficult times was critical. The A/S pointed out that U.S. troops in Japan were important for the Japanese as well, and implored Kan to move carefully on the Futenma issue. PDAS Mitchell mentioned that he had spoken about the Futenma issue, which was very sensitive, with the DPJ's Parliamentary Vice Foreign Minister Akihisa Nagashima (whom Kan had earlier commented would be a pragmatic and influential player in the new Ministry of Defense). Mitchell stated that he was willing to discuss with the DPJ side the USG's rationale for the realignment plan, but asked the DPJ to be open-minded and work together with the U.S. government as partners.

16. (C) Kan said that he completely agreed that blaming foreign pressure was not good for Japan-U.S. relations in the long-term, and admitted that Japan bears some responsibility in this issue. For example, the LDP would give the Okinawan people hope on issues of concern to them, then blame the U.S. after making decisions together with the USG. Kan professed that he did not have any specific good ideas on how to resolve the Futenma dilemma, and instead pointed out a contradiction-that although the U.S. military presence in Japan is important, Okinawa was a special place (a place where a ground war took place, as well as a place that experienced a long period of U.S. occupation after the war) with special relations with the Japanese central government. Because of the strong possibilities of fissures in the relationship between Okinawa and Tokyo, Kan said he needed to think more about how to reconcile this contradiction. Kan revealed that at the time of former U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's decision to move troops from the front lines to the rear in places like Korea, he had thought the U.S. could do something similar in Japan to reduce the burden on Okinawa by transferring troops to Guam. However, Kan continued, the overall situation has changed.

17. (C) According to Kan, his National Strategy Bureau will

not be a decisive policy maker on security issues. Instead, Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, who Kan said was a very powerful, competent, and eager politician, would take the lead on the U.S.-Japan security alliance. Kan explained that he himself might get involved if directed to by the Prime Minister.

¶18. (S) Campbell said that because President Obama's November visit to Japan was a historic opportunity, both sides needed to decide quickly how to translate these security-related discussions into the bilateral process. The A/S pointed out that presently, there were several DPJ officials making contrasting statements on security issues that were not well coordinated. The U.S. will not respond to such statements, Campbell stated, but hopes there will be a more disciplined policy process to deal effectively and constructively with different issues, including refueling, nuclear issues (such as the "secret agreement"), and Okinawa issues. He then asked Kan to help impose discipline on bilateral interaction. PDAS Mitchell added that Secretary of Defense Robert Gates would be coming to Japan in mid-October and will be interested in discussing these alliance issues as well as Afghanistan-Pakistan.

¶19. (C) Kan said that the Japanese government also would like President Obama's visit to be a success, and that Prime Minister Hatoyama must now explain Japan's security environment to the Japanese people and convince them of the challenging problems facing the nation. Kan assured Campbell that he would to his utmost to assist Hatoyama in this task, but pointed out the limited amount of time before President Obama's arrival.

¶10. (U) Participants:  
Naoto Kan  
A/S Campbell  
PDAS Mitchell  
DCM James Zumwalt  
Yumiko Miyazaki (interpreter)

¶11. (U) Assistant Secretary of State Campbell and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Mitchell have cleared this cable.  
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